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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

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SUBJECT: KYRGYZ FOREIGN MINISTER CONCERNED ABOUT HATFIELD
NEWS

REF: STATE 78275

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i. Gregory Winstead, Reason 1.4 (b)
and (d).

¶1. (C) Charge delivered reftel points to Foreign Minister Sarbayev on July 28. FM Sarbayev expressed his concern at the decision not to prosecute Senior Airman Hatfield, adding that he could not welcome the decision. Sarbayev told the Charge that he felt that U.S. was not fulfilling its commitments, while Kyrgyzstan had. He stated that he had believed that the Hatfield case would be fully resolved in a criminal conviction. Sarbayev did admit that the Hatfield decision would not ultimately damage U.S.-Kyrgyzstan bilateral relations, adding that it might affect Kyrgyz society's view of the United States.

¶2. (C) Sarbayev indicated that the Hatfield decision would increase the pressure on the Kyrgyz government from groups inside and outside the government, which would view the decision as a victory. (Note: His comment seemed designed to include foreign countries that have been opposed to the presence of U.S. personnel at Manas. End Note.) He said these groups would actively use this decision against the government and the Manas Transit Center. He added that the decision would also raise discontent in Kyrgyz society. Sarbayev reiterated that the Hatfield case was important for the Kyrgyz government and had been a main point in the Manas Transit Center negotiations, and in recent discussions between senior U.S. officials and President Bakiyev.

¶3. (C) Sarbayev questioned the timing of the Hatfield decision, observing that the Manas Transit Center agreement had just been signed. He told the Charge that based on his discussions during the Transit Center negotiations, he had been "promised" that a criminal case would be brought against Hatfield. He added that he had lobbied hard in Parliament for the ratification of the agreement based upon his understanding that Hatfield would be prosecuted. Sarbaev told the Charge that he wished the Hatfield process had gone on longer in order to delay this "bad" decision.

¶4. (C) Sarbayev had no comment to the news that the Secretary of Defense had authorized an additional payment of \$250,000 to Mrs. Ivanova.
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